(c) Yes, Sir. The basic facilities have been provided to labourers residing in all colonies of Kanhan area.

(d) Not applicable in view of reply at (c) above.

Illegal mining and theft of coal

2622. SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of illegal mining and theft of coal from mines;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to curb such practices in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Illegal mining mostly takes place in old and abandoned mines, small and isolated patches, areas situated at remote/isolated places from mines, which are scattered over a large area, exposed coal seams and also in areas not in the leasehold areas of public sector coal companies. Due to clandestine nature of illegal mining activities, the exact quantum of coal, so mined and losses incurred on account of illegal mining cannot be ascertained. However, on the basis of raids conducted by the security personnel of coal companies as well as joint raids with the law and order authorities of the concerned State Government, the approximate quantity of coal recovered during 2008-09 and its value thereof were approximately 8,584 tonnes and Rs.1.02 crore respectively.

Similarly, theft/pilferage of coal is carried out stealthily and clandestinely and as such, it is not possible to specify the losses incurred on account of this menace. However, as per the raids conducted by the security personnel as well as joint raids with the law and order authorities of the State Governments, the quantity of coal recovered and its approximate value during 2008-09 were 23,198 tonnes and Rs. 334 crore respectively in Coal India Ltd. (CIL).

(c) Since law and order is a State subject, primarily it is the responsibility of State/District Administration to take necessary deterrent action to stop/curb illegal mining. However, following steps are being taken by the companies to prevent illegal mining.

(a) Rat holes created by illegal mining are being dozed off and filled up with stone and debris wherever possible.

(b) Concrete walls have been erected on the mouth of the abandoned mines to prevent access and illegal activities in these areas.

(c) Regular raids/checks being conducted by security personnel and static security pickets including armed guards during the night hours are being deployed at pithead depots.

(d) Surprise raids/checks being conducted jointly by security personnel and law and order authorities of the concerned State Government.

(e) Fencing is being constructed at the various illegal mining sites along with displaying of signboards mentioning "Dangerous and Prohibited Place".

(f) Dumping of overburden is being done on the outcrop zones, which are not required to be mined.

(g) Collection of intelligence reports about illegal coal depots and illegal movement of coal and informing district authorities of the same for taking preventive action.

(h) Installation of check-posts at vulnerable points to check transport documents.

(i) Training of existing security personnel, refresher training of CISF personnel and basic training of new recruits in security, discipline for strengthening the security set up.

(j) The coal companies maintain close liaison with the State Authorities.

(k) Committee/task force has been constituted at different level (block level, sub-divisional level, district level. State level) at some subsidiaries of CIL to monitor different aspects of illegal mining.

To prevent theft/pilferage of coal, following steps are being taken by the coal companies:-

(i) Collection of intelligence reports about illegal coal depots and illegal movement of coal and informing district authorities of the same for taking preventive action./filing of FIR.

(ii) Installation of check posts at vulnerable points to check transport documents.

(iii) Construction of watch towers and providing lighting arrangements around the coal stacking area.

(iv) Erection of barbed wire wall fencing around pithead depots, static security mining including deployment of armed guards during the night hours.

(v) Escorting of loaded rakes up to railway weigh bridges by armed guards and joint patrolling with Railway Protection Force (RPF) in the railways track which are prone to wagon looting.

(vi) Sealing of illegal mining spots.

(vii) Stringent action against transport vehicles caught in the act of theft or pilferage.

(viii) Engagement of lady security guards for preventing women and children from indulging in the theft/pilferage of coal, strengthening of the security disciplined by reassessing the requirement of security personnel, horizontal movement of executives with aptitude for security work and inducting qualified security personnel at junior, middle and senior level.

(ix) Training of existing security personnel refresher training of CISF personnel and basic training of new recruits in security discipline for strengthening the security set up.

(x) The coal companies maintain close liaison with the State authorities.

Quality of Coal by CIL

2623. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large quantity of coal produced by Coal India Ltd. (CIL) is of low grade;

(b) if so, what is the percentage of low grade coal produced by CIL during 2008-09;

(c) whether as a result of low grade coal, several power plants are importing coal under Open General Licence (OGL);

(d) if so, the steps being taken by CIL to improve the quality of coal in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL) : (a) and (b) Quality of coal produced by Coal India Limited is largely of lower grades because of the reasons that coal deposit in India is having inherently high ash content due to Drift origin. The share of lower grade namely "E" & "F" Grade of coal produced by Coal India Limited during 2008-09 was 275.60 million tonnes, out of total production of 403.73 million tonnes, equivalent to about 68%.

(c) Non-coking coal is imported by Power Plants and other industries on account of various factors including non availability of required quantity of low ash non-coking coal in the country, environmental consideration, cost and locational advantages etc.

(d) The following steps have been taken by Coal India Limited to improve the quality of coal:-

(i) Selective mining of bands of >1 meter thickness

(ii) Appropriate positioning of Over Burden and coal benches to avoid contamination,

(iii) Scrapping/cleaning of coal benches before blasting.

(iv) Installation of metal detectors/magnetic separators over running conveyors before loading coal.

(v) Deployment of Surface Miners for Selective mining by subsidiary coal companies of Coal India Limited to improve quality of coal.

(vi) Establishment of well equipped laboratories at all the projects for regular quality assessment.

(vii) Shale-picking, at mine face, stocks & loading points/sidings to address the issue of consistent quality.